

In the claims:

1-22. (Canceled)

23. (New): An isolated polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:

a) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence which is at least 95% identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the polypeptide has aminopeptidase protein activity;

b) a polypeptide which is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which is at least 90% identical to a nucleic acid comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:3, or the nucleotide sequence of the DNA insert of the plasmid deposited with ATCC as Accession Number PTA-1642, wherein the polypeptide has aminopeptidase protein activity; and

c) a polypeptide comprising at least 100 contiguous amino acids of the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the polypeptide has aminopeptidase activity.

24. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 23, wherein the polypeptide comprises an amino acid sequence which is at least 95% identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the polypeptide has aminopeptidase protein activity.

25. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 23, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence which is at least 90% identical to a nucleic acid comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2, SEQ ID NO:3, or the nucleotide sequence of the DNA insert of the plasmid deposited with ATCC as Accession Number PTA-1642, wherein the polypeptide has aminopeptidase protein activity.

26. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 23, wherein the polypeptide comprises at least 100 contiguous amino acids of the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1, wherein the polypeptide has aminopeptidase activity.

27. (New): An isolated polypeptide selected from the group consisting of:

a) a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1;

b) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2;

c) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3; and

d) a polypeptide encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of the DNA insert of the plasmid deposited with ATCC as Accession Number PTA-1642.

28. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 27, wherein the polypeptide comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

29. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 27, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

30. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 27, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3.

31. (New): The isolated polypeptide of claim 27, wherein the polypeptide is encoded by a nucleic acid molecule comprising the nucleotide sequence of the DNA insert of the plasmid deposited with ATCC as Accession Number PTA-1642.

32. (New): The polypeptide of claim 24, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

33. (New): The polypeptide of claims 25, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

34. (New): The polypeptide of claims 26, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

35. (New): The polypeptide of claims 28, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

36. (New): The polypeptide of claims 29, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

37. (New): The polypeptide of claims 30, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.

38. (New): The polypeptide of claims 31, further comprising heterologous amino acid sequences.